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FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9291  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RHEHWSR/WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 000291

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/27/2017

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SUBJECT: ANBAR LEADERS ASK GOI MINISTERS FOR SUPPORT ON  
MEETING SECURITY NEEDS

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 b and d.

¶1. (C) Summary: On January 23, the Ambassador hosted a luncheon which brought Anbar provincial leadership together with GOI national level officials to discuss security issues of concern to the province. Anbar officials raised a number of "unanswered requests" with the Ministers of Interior, Defense, Finance, the Minister of State for National Security and the National Security Advisor. Their priorities included: consistent funding for Iraqi Security Force salaries and equipment, an increase in the number of Iraqi Police allotted to Anbar, protection of the Hadeetha-Beiji oil pipeline and the Anbar highway, and opening a branch office of the Ministry of State for National Security Affairs in Anbar. The Anbar side obtained a commitment from MoI Bolani to raise the number of police allotted to Anbar from 11,330 to 14,000. MSNSA Waeily committed to issue an order for the opening an office in Ramadi effective immediately, under the condition that the ISF in Anbar provide its employees with sufficient protection. Atmospherics were positive, with NSA Mowaffaq Rubaie welcoming continued dialogue hosted by the central government, pointing out that to the Prime Minister, Anbar is a high priority and "not just another province." End Summary.

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THE ANBARIS PRESENT THEIR CASE  
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¶2. (C) In attendance from the Anbar side were members of the Anbar Coordination Committee which advises the PM: Governor Ma'moun Alwani, PC Chair Abdalsalaam Abdullah, Deputy Governor Ali Awad, Deputy Minister of Industry and Minerals Mohamed, Prime Minister Advisor Mohamed Salman, and National Salvation Council representative Sheikh Ahmed Abu Risha. In addition, Police Chief Hameed and 7th Iraqi Army Division Commander MGen Murthi were present. On the national level side were MoI Bolani, MoF Bayan, MoD Abdulkader, NSA Rubbaie, and Minister of State for National Security Waeily. Representatives from PRT Anbar, MNF-West and the Embassy were present, and helped organize the event.

¶3. (C) Governor Ma'moun and PC Chair Abdullah spoke for the group, pointing out that communication with Baghdad had improves since the formation of the "Anbar Coordination Committee" (Note: This is the six-person committee charged with advising PM Maliki on Anbar issues. The Committee is led by the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (IIP) Dr. Rafaa Essawi and composed of Anbar officials, an Anbar Salvation Council rep and a PM Advisor). In a nod to the Anbar Salvation Council, they highlighted the involvement from the tribes of Anbar in fighting Al Qaeda and the addition of tribal representatives to the provincial government as an important development. They went on to discuss the province's security needs, highlighting inconsistent funding for ISF salaries and equipment as a major obstacle to its

effectiveness in the fight against AQI. They said that an increase in the level of IP's allotted to Anbar was essential to beating AQI - along with a proportional increase in funding for their salaries and equipment.

¶4. (C) The Governor and PC Chair said that an additional IA brigade was required to protect the Hadeetha-Beiji pipeline and the Hadeetha refinery, and ultimately reactivate this major potential employer in Anbar. They added that insurgent threats had effectively paralyzed traffic through the province, and urged greater GOI support for highway police.

¶5. (C) They asked about the status of the branch office promised by the Minister of State for National Security at the October 7 Anbar Tribal Sheikhs Conference at the Rashid Hotel. Governor Ma'moun asked Minister of State Waeily to be circumspect in his choice of representatives sent to Anbar. He made reference to "a number of national level officials sent to Anbar" had proven themselves "corrupt and untrustworthy." (Atmospherics note: Throughout their presentation on the needs of Anbar, Governor Ma'moun, with his assertive, unapologetically blunt speaking style was in contrast to the more mild-mannered Abdulsalaam who spoke from a list of points and made sure to thank each Minister for their efforts before he went on to point out areas where the GOI could be doing more. End note.)

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NATIONAL GOI LEADERS RESPOND  
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¶6. (C) The MoD responded defensively, pointing out that it did not make sense to add another IA brigade in Anbar, seeing as the two already present were not filled to capacity. If

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volunteers from Anbar could not be convinced to join the army, he continued, there were volunteers from other provinces who could be sent to join the 1st and 7th brigades in Anbar, if the local government did not object. Economically speaking, he continued, it was not efficient to raise an entire brigade (which in his estimation would take six months) simply to protect one highway. He suggested that the Anbar government seek cooperation from local tribes along the Beiji-Hadeetha route to ensure its security.

¶7. (C) National Security Advisor Rubaie noted that PM Maliki is committed to improving the security situation in Anbar. He prodded the Anbari side to undertake an active campaign to encourage the men of Anbar to volunteer for the police and army. Rubaie added that the PM was keenly interested in knowing what the Anbar government could do to attract Iraqis currently fighting with Al Qaeda and in the insurgency to join the political process.

¶8. (C) Clearly frustrated, PM Advisor Mohammed Salman told Rubaie that the Anbar Coordination Committee led by Dr. Rafaa Essawi had discussed such issues at length, presented recommendations to the PM and to the various ministries. When they approached the GOI on implementing any part of their recommendations, he continued, they found a series of obstacles in their path. Salman said he had hoped that the Ministers present at the meeting would be interested in knowing what these obstacles were, and in helping the Anbaris overcome them.

¶9. (C) On peeling Anbar natives away from the insurgency, Governor Ma'moun observed the solution was simple: one just had to look at the reasons they joined the Al Qaeda in the first place. He noted how, in the absence of a GOI compensation program, Al Qaeda had successfully purchased the loyalty of many Anbar families by providing them with funds to rebuild their homes destroyed during military operations. Anbaris were fighting an insurgency against a government had until been unable to provide basic services like security, jobs, or even telecommunications. The Governor pointed out

that, despite his best efforts to lobby the GOI in Baghdad, no phone system currently existed in Anbar.

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SOME GAINS ACHIEVED  
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¶10. (C) While the Anbar officials did not receive all the answers they were looking for, MoI Bolani did agree to raise the police levels for Anbar from 11,330 to 14,000. Further, Minister of State Waeily said he would issue an order to send a representative to Ramadi - under the condition that the Anbar IP forces would provide adequate protection for the branch office.

¶11. (C) Comment: Lack of communication with the national level government has been a major frustration for the Anbar government. This meeting was the first opportunity that the Anbar leadership has had to interface with all security ministers and finance minister all in one room and relay the concerns they have frequently voiced to their PRT and Embassy interlocutors.

KHALILZAD